

**John Elsesser  
Town Manager  
Town of Coventry, CT  
Testimony before the Planning & Development Committee  
February 1, 2013**

**Testimony in support of:**

- **H.B. No. 5530, AN ACT PERMITTING THE POSTING OF LEGAL NOTICES ON MUNICIPAL WEB SITES.**
- **S.B. No. 143, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PUBLICATION OF NOTICE IN NEWSPAPERS.**
- **H.B. No. 5532, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PUBLICATION OF LEGAL NOTICES.**

While well intentioned, unfunded mandates often impose an additional strain on already strapped municipal budgets. Unfunded mandates are often passed with little investigation or discussion into the cost that is passed onto towns. Requiring any new unfunded mandates to be approved by a 2/3 vote of the General Assembly will ensure that lawmakers fully consider the cost implications associated with new mandates. For these reasons, I strongly support the various proposed bills that require the legislature to approve any new unfunded mandates by a 2/3 majority vote of the legislature. .

In addition to the 2/3 mandate approval bills, I would like to focus my comments in support of **HB-5530**, **HB-5532**, and **SB-143** which would allow towns to post legal notices and other required notices on the town's website rather than in the newspaper. Towns are required by law to publish numerous legal notices in newspapers. Unfortunately, advertising prices have increased dramatically, placing a fiscal burden on Connecticut's small towns. In addition, many small town newspapers have gone out of business, requiring towns to publish notices in the more expensive metropolitan newspapers.

Allowing towns with the staff and Internet capabilities to post such notices on their websites will help reduce this fiscal burden while ensuring that the public has access to such notices. We are hearing from towns that it could save them anywhere from five to twenty thousand dollars annually. Also, for the vast majority of people, posting legal notices on the Internet will allow greater access to this information. I therefore **strongly support HB-5530, HB-5532 and SB-143** which will allow towns to post certain reports, job advertisements, etc. on the Internet.